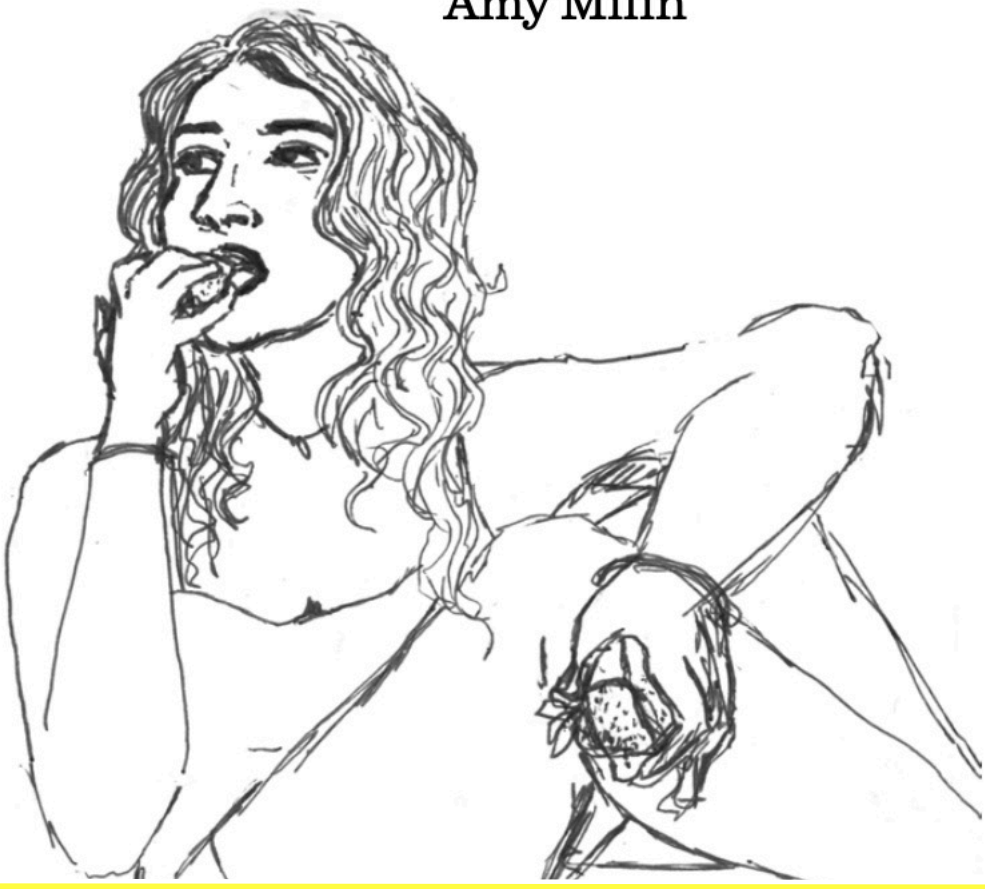
Venmo amy-milin for full 24-page version.
Instructions on final page.

Mirror -or- Sky

Poems, diaries,
and sketches by
Amy Milin



PREVIEW

Near and Farther Suns

Can I feel tenderly towards the morning, if not for my lover?
The sunrise hanging low and near, I step outside to greet it
cross-armed in his jacket, keeping my heat close.
I leave my jilted feelings. I leave my lover's peaceful sleep.
My sigh is a lovelorn song, and the white fog of it
circles the early winter forest like a searching bird.

The sun, at least, has a little still to give me,
has a little left for everyone: it comes all this way
for the sparse leaves of the evergreens, imparting
all its life and spark, and still it saves
this very last drop of itself, gleaming and pure
just for catching golden in my eyelashes.

Can you believe it? The sun comes all this way for me!
A blazing star, it trembles in my view
then breaks apart: colored sparks shake loose,
glinting wings unfurled. The yellow moth head burns
and now the sun and I are face to face.
Both of us too bright for eyes.

Returning to the window, I watch my lover, seeking.
His face is soft and creased like folded bedthings,
so faultless in his sleep. The white, bare branches catch the sun
and they simply are hands, they plainly say *I want to hold your hand*
bound in skies they'll never touch but going on
pained and bold and reaching to receive

whatever the sun can give.
Oh, yes – whatever the sun
can give.

Small Town Mind

If you're not going to love me, you can't touch me.
I want you to touch me. Maybe then you'll remember
you like touching me. You kept saying you did
but my ribs felt the cold night after night
of your hands' absence, and when we did touch
you always reminded me not to take it to heart.

You said, "You'll crack me eventually."
It was news to me, this vote of confidence.
On the last of the good nights
you made this joke, being a radio announcer
with the karaoke microphone. You said,
"I love chaos...I love the streets...I love –"
you looked at me
and you did it, the corny thing,
you said, "you."

And I said,
"Why did you say that?"
and was happy, but not stupid.

A few days later, I asked what you wanted.
I said, with the requisite sass and remove,
"You say you love me."
A challenging quirk of my eyebrow
over the joint I was rolling.
Without hesitation, you won.
You said, "Are you joking?"
You said, "That's why I don't say it."

Once, your eyes were shooting sparks.
Inspired, you announced I'd come to pull the sword
from the stone of your loneliness, a stone bottomsunk
in the small lake of your life, a circle any passerby
might walk a ponderous lap around.
I watched for hidden movements.

I wanted to love you for the mean-eyed mess
you are, to have out these dramas but also
the fun, the sex in the car and the kitchen
and the tearful eyes, and wiggling my fingers
into unexpected crevices of your body, bathing
in the river on blue nights wishing
I was more beautiful, but knowing
you watch my flawed body with desire
as I watch your flawed body with desire.

Why won't you love me long enough
for my own repulsion to surface?

Say I'm the more romantic one, repudiate
these base desires like hoping for love –
but you believe with all your might
the spell of the moment, while I track
the movements of your eyes when we are together,
unwilling to feel a thing completely
unless I have good evidence.

Can I ignore you? Can I ignore you?
Meanwhile all these
sexual fantasies
about someone who's not you...
though sometimes you're in them.

She hurries out the door and slams it, then hesitates outside.
She cracks the door back open, just to close it more softly.
Hands clasped, she walks down the hallway, looking at her feet.

I swore I'd live a life all bent by feeling.
But with all the feeling, and the not feeling,
still there is your time to fill,
your body to deal with. I force myself
to forget what I know unimpeachably
about the world, impressed in my soul,
all to learn it again, suffer and escape –

holding onto desire
to suffer
then suffering –
what kind of life?! –

I swore I'd live a life all bent by feeling.
Emphasize my small town mind.

THE SIMPLICITY OF CHANGE CAN BE PAINFUL...
BUT...
to perpetuate familiar cycles without addition is artificially to resist time & its natural organic action on human character...

Speaking to the air, imagining a conversation with him,
explaining my relationship to love. Suddenly, I stopped myself.
“Who are you speaking to?”

And listened to the silence, sitting on the futon mattress
in the little room.

This zine is composed of diary entries
and poems, written throughout 2024.
Some diary entries are written
in scene form. The theme is love!

All work for *Mirror or Sky* was done at
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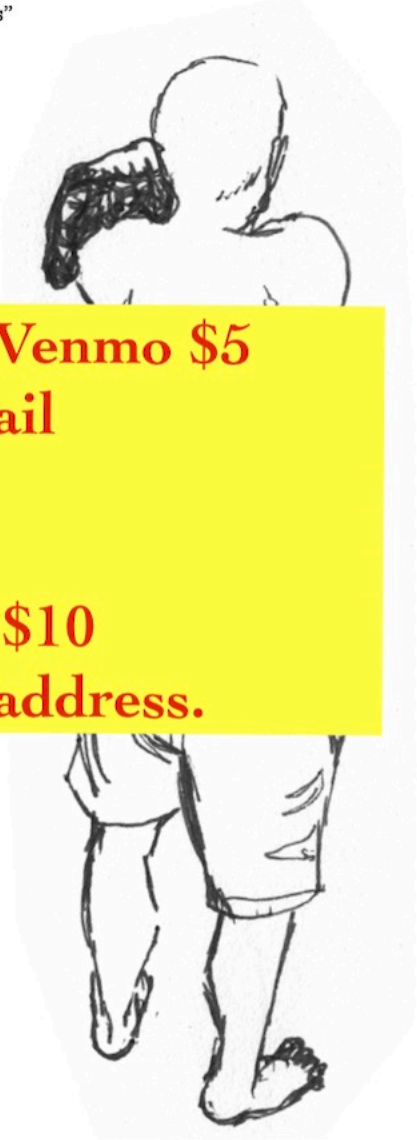

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